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- dark places of the earth*; (2) interpret of the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chron. 36:19; Jer. 52:13; or (3) of the Maccabean period. Similarly treat Ps. 79. Compare Pss. 75, 76, 80 with 2 Kgs. 19; with Ps. 83, cf. 2 Chron. 20.
2. From passages such as Pss. 50:7-23; 73:12-26; 76; 77:13-20; 80:8-15, etc., form a general idea of the intellectual and spiritual characteristics of Asaph and the Asaphic school.
 3. Give briefly a summary of the contribution of these Psalms to the religious thought and life of Israel and through them the ethical and spiritual teachings for our times, e. g., spiritual conceptions of religion, principles of divine judgment, witness of history to God's providence (Ps. 78), etc.

THIRTY-FOURTH STUDY.—PSALMS OF THE SONS OF KORAH.

[The material of this "study" is edited by Professor Harper.]

I. INTRODUCTORY TOPICS.

1. **Sons of Korah.** (1) Their history, Num. 6:16; 26:11; 1 Chron. 12:6; (2) their temple service, 1 Chron. 9:17-19; 26:1; 2 Chron. 20:19; Neh. 11:19; (3) Psalms ascribed to them; in what books found?
2. **The Service of Song.** (1) Trace the employment of music in the religious worship, (a) before David, Num. 10:10; (b) in David's time, 1 Chron. 15:16-24. Organization of the service of song by him, 1 Chron. 16:4-6, 41-43; 23:5, 30; 25; (c) in later times, 2 Chron. 5:12-14; 29:25-30; 35:15; Ez. 3:10, 11; Neh. 12:27-42, 45-47. (2) Elements of the service of song, (a) choir of Levites, assisted by women (?) 1 Chron. 25:5; Ps. 68:25; Ez. 2:65; (b) orchestra of Levites and Priests; (c) the congregation, 1 Chron. 16:36; 2 Chron. 7:3; Jer. 33:11. (3) Character of Hebrew music. "A recitative melody with a few simple cadences." "The melodies were preserved by tradition." "There were no notes or written indication of the music."* (d) Use of the Psalms in the religious worship, a) examples in 1 Chron. 16:7; 2 Chron. 29:30; Neh. 12:46, etc. b) Musical directions in the titles of the Psalms; c) the form of many psalms, e. g., 24; 42:5, 11; 43:5; 80:3, 7, 19; 136, etc.

II. BIBLICAL LESSON.

1. Read carefully Psalms 42-49 (regarding 43 as part of 42) 85, 87, 88. Make notes on the following points: (1) their general qualities of style, e. g., 42:6, 7; 44:23; 46; 48:4, 5; 49:16-19; 85:10; 87. (2) Elements which may be said to be characteristic: (a) expressions peculiar to them, e. g., *living God*, 42:2; 84:2; *Jehovah of Hosts*, 46:7, 11; 48:8; 84:1, 3, 12, etc.; *city of God*, 46:4; 48:8; 87:3. (b) predominant ideas, e. g., of God, 44:4; 45:6; 47:2; 84:3; of the temple worship, 42, 84; of Jerusalem, 46, 48, 87.
2. Are the characteristics which have been observed in these Psalms (1) sufficiently marked, (2) not measurably common to them with other psalms, and, (3) fairly in accordance with what we know of the Sons of Korah, so as to warrant confidence in the trustworthiness of the titles?

III. SPECIAL STUDIES.

1. Treat exhaustively Psalm 45.
 - (1) Read carefully and notice (a) the persons addressed, (b) representation of the king (vs. 2-9), (c) representation of the queen (vs. 10-15), (d) what kind of an occasion seems to be described, (e) expressions requiring explanation, e. g., (v. 1) "my tongue is the pen of a ready writer;" (v. 2) "grace is poured into thy lips;" (v. 4) because of truth, etc.; "thy right hand shall

* Murray, "Origin and Growth of the Psalms." Cf. also Binnie, "The Psalms, etc.," 355-363; Smith's Bib. Dict. Art. *Music*.

teach thee;" (v. 7) "oil of gladness;" (v. 9) "thy honorable women;" (v. 12) "daughter of Tyre."

- (2) Interpret the psalm historically as written in honor of a Jewish king's marriage, (a) mark all expressions seemingly unsuitable to such an interpretation; (b) learn something of Hebrew marriage customs; (c) decide from the helps at hand to what king the psalm may refer, whether Solomon, 1 Kgs. 3:1; Ahab, cf. v. 8b with 1 Kgs. 22:39; Jehoram, cf. v. 12 with 2 Kgs. 8:18; 1 Kgs. 16:31; Hezekiah, Isa. 62:4,5; 2 Kgs. 1:21. (d) Granting this interpretation, give reasons for the presence of this (secular) song in the psalter.
- (3) Give closer study to the expressions noted above as incongruous with the historical interpretation; (a) can they be fairly interpreted of an earthly king? e. g., (v. 6) *O God* (Elohim) not necessarily used of a divine person, cf. Ex. 7:1; Ps. 82:6. (b) Considerations in favor of a Messianic interpretation, e. g., tradition, New Testament use of v. 6, Heb. 1:8,9, presence of this psalm in the psalter; (c) if Messianic, note representation of the Messiah, e. g., his person, authority, relation to heathen, etc., (2) similar Messianic representations in the psalter, cf. 72, 2, 87, etc.; elements of fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

2. Read carefully Psalm 84.

- (1) Note expressions needing explanation and so far as possible determine their meaning, (vs. 1,2) "tabernacles," "courts;" (v. 2) "my soul," "my heart and my flesh;" (v. 3) "*even* thine altars;" (v. 4) "dwell in thy house" "still praising;" (v. 5) "highways to Zion;" (v. 6) "Valley of Weeping," "early rain;" (v. 9) "our shield," "thine anointed;" (v. 10) "tents of wickedness."
- (2) Determine the meaning of each verse, the logical connections of the verses, select a theme, e. g., *a joyful song of God's house*, and analyze the psalm, e. g., vs. 1-4, God's house desired; vs. 5-8, God's house sought; vs. 9-12, God's house preferred.
- (3) Study the psalm as an example of *lyrical* poetry, (a) figurative elements, (b) rapid and elevated style, (c) abrupt transitions. Compare in these respects this psalm with Pss. 42 and 46.
- (4) Observe the teachings of the psalm concerning (a) man's desire for God and the satisfying of that desire; (b) conception of the value of religious worship.

IV. GENERAL TOPICS.

1. Compare these psalms with those of Asaph, noting (1) resemblances, cf. 44 and 74; 84 with 73:17, etc., both, national and levitical; "no confession of sin;" (2) differences, in representations of God, in respect to style, in point of view, e. g., korahite, regal and priestly, asaphic, prophetic.
2. Make a similar comparison with the Psalms of David, e. g., 42:2; 84:3 with 63:2; 27:4. These show "more unbroken sublimity of style," "more unrestrained emotional expression," while David's are "pitched on a lower key" and "show a larger acquaintance with life."*
3. Sum up the religious conceptions of these psalms as they may be gathered under the following heads: (a) Man's relation to God. (b) God's care for his people. (c) The glories of Christ and the Church.

* Alexander, "Witness of the Psalms to Christ," Lect. iii.